

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A graphical user interface associated with a group interaction application for facilitating file sharing among a first member of a group and at least one other member of the group over a network, comprising:

a group space comprising a first display area for providing an appearance of a shared file location in which at least one of the other group members may access; and

at least one control located in a second display area selectable by the first user for selecting at least one task associated with the group space and to activate certain operations with respect to files located in the first display area, such that at least one other group members is automatically shown the result of the operations performed with respect to the files displayed in the first display area.

2. The invention as in claim 1, wherein the network is a peer-to-peer network.

3. The invention as in claim 1, wherein the at least one task comprises a first computer file system task usable to perform a drag and drop operation with respect to files located in the first display area.

4. The invention as in claim 1, wherein the at least one task comprises a first computer file system task usable to perform at least one of a copy, cut, paste or edit operation with respect to files located in the first display area.
5. The invention as in claim 1, wherein the group space is comprised of a subfolder that is displayed in a folder view.
6. The invention as in claim 1, wherein the first user may perform file system operations with respect to files in the shared space on the basis of permissions being granted to the first user.
7. The invention as in claim 1, wherein said group space is assigned a unique identifier that is made available to the at least one other member.
8. The invention as in claim 7, wherein each of the group members having access to said group space is assigned a unique identifier that is made available to the other group members.
9. The invention as in claim 1 further comprising a second control located in the second display area, the second control including a drop-down menu selectable by the first user for defining one of a plurality of roles for the at least one other group member.

10. The invention as in claim 1 further comprising a second control located in the second display area, the second control selectable by the first user for adding at least one additional group member.
11. The invention as in claim 1, wherein the appearance of the first group space may be altered by the first user, and wherein the group interaction program further comprises means for causing the appearance of a corresponding group space displayed to the at least one other group member to also be altered consistent with the alteration of the first group space.
12. The invention as in claim 1, further comprising a file drop target for receiving an indication of a file dropped by the first user whereby a notification corresponding to the indication is automatically transmitted to the at least one other online group member.
13. The invention as in claim 1, further comprising a selectable indicator for visually presenting a group list to the first user, the group list including an indication field of a role for each of the members in the list a plurality of icons, each icon representing a group to which the first user belongs.
14. The invention as in claim 13, wherein the list of group members includes indicia concerning connection by each group members to the network.

15. A graphical user interface for facilitating an online group interaction among a first online member of a group and at least one other online member of the group over a computer network comprising:

a first shared space display area that acts as a drop target for at least one file icon, which upon dropping also becomes visible to the at least one other online member of the group, and wherein a shared file associated with the at least one dropped file icon may be retrieved by selecting the associated icon; and

at least one visible task item selectable by the first user to activate an operation to be performed with respect to the first shared space display area.

16. The invention as in claim 15, wherein the computer network comprises a peer-to-peer network.

17. A method of forming a group space to enable interaction between a first user and at least one other user over a network comprising:

displaying to the first user via a first user display a group folder object having associated therewith a first selectable task for forming a group comprising the first user and at least one other user;

transmitting from the first user a request to join the group by sending a communication over the network to a computing device used by the at least one other user to initiate a group communication session between the first user and the at least one other user; and

receiving a response to the invitation request by receipt of a unique numeric identifier associated with the at least one other user.

18. The method according to claim 17, further comprising presenting a group space to the first user in response to receipt of the selection of the task, wherein the group space is uniquely associated with the first group.

19. The method according to claim 18, wherein the group space includes a second selectable group icon associated with a list of members comprising the first user and at least one other user who is a member of the group.

20. The method according to claim 19, wherein the network comprises a peer-to-peer network.